IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with <u>underlining</u> and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1, 3, 9 and 10 in accordance with the following:

1.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A voice interactive system, comprising:

an acoustic processing part performing acoustic signal processing with respect to an input voice signal;

a voice recognizing part recognizing contents of a voice contained in the voice signal after being subjected to the acoustic signal processing;

a voice interacting part transmitting information to a user through a voice output or a combination of the voice output and another information transmission unit based on the contents of the voice; and

a barge-in control part having a barge-in function of suspending transmission of information by an input or an output of the acoustic processing part[,] or an input signal from an external input in the course of transmission of information, wherein:

the barge-in control part detects one or more feature values from an input or an output of the acoustic processing part, or an input signal from the external input, and determines whether or not the barge-in function is set to be effective based on the one or more feature values, the one or more feature values including positional information of the user detected from the input signal from the external input, and

the barge-in control part calculates an environment evaluation value of a position of the user~~, based on the positional information and environmental information on the position,~~ <u>by comparing the position of the user with previously recorded map information that represents noise levels in a plurality of areas,</u> and determines the barge-in function to be non-effective in a case where the environment evaluation value exceeds a predetermined threshold value.

2.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The voice interactive system according to claim 1, wherein the one or more feature values further include a noise feature value, and the barge-in function is set to be non-effective in a case where the noise feature value exceeds a predetermined threshold value.

3.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The voice interactive system according to claim 1, wherein the one or more feature values further include a signal to noise ratio of the voice signal, and the barge-in function is set to be non-effective in the case where the signal to noise ratio of the voice signal exceeds a predetermined threshold value.

4.   (CANCELLED)

5.   (ORIGINAL) The voice interactive system according to claim 1, wherein the voice interacting part notifies the user of an effective/non-effective state of the barge-in function using at least one of a voice and another information transmission unit.

6.   (CANCELLED)

7.   (CANCELLED)

8.   (CANCELLED)

9.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A voice interactive method, comprising:
performing acoustic signal processing with respect to an input voice signal and producing a processed, output signal;
recognizing contents of a voice contained in the processed, output signal, after the input voice signal has been subjected to the acoustic signal processing;
transmitting information to a user through a voice output or a combination of the voice output and another information transmission unit based on the contents of the voice; and
determining whether a barge-in function of suspending transmission of information by an input or an output in the performing acoustic signal processing or an input signal from an external input in the transmission information to a user is set to be effective or non-effective, wherein, in the determining:

one or more feature values are detected from the input voice signal or the processed, output signal or the input signal from the external input, and whether or not the barge-in function is set to be effective is determined based on the one or more feature values, the one or more feature values including positional information of the user detected from the input signal from the external input,

an environment evaluation value of a position of the user is calculated, based on the positional information and environmental information on the position, and

the barge-in function is determined to be non-effective in the case where the environment evaluation value exceeds a predetermined threshold value by comparing the position of the user with previously recorded map information that represents noise levels in a plurality of areas.

10.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer program product in which a computer-executable program for realizing a voice interactive method is recorded on a medium, the program causing the computer to execute: performing acoustic signal processing with respect to an input voice signal and producing a processed, output signal;

recognizing contents of a voice contained in the processed, output signal after the input voice signal has been subjected to the acoustic signal processing;

transmitting information to a user through a voice output or a combination of the voice output and another information transmission unit based on the contents of the voice; and

determining whether a barge-in function of suspending transmission of information by an input or an output in the acoustic signal processing or an input signal from an external input the transmitting information to a user is set to be effective or non-effective, wherein, in the, determining:

one or more feature values are detected from the input voice signal or the processed, output signal or the input signal from the external input, and whether or not the barge-in function is set to be effective is determined based on the one or more feature values, and the one or more feature values include positional information of the user detected from the input signal from the external input, and

an environment evaluation value of a position of the user is calculated based on the positional information and environmental information on the position, and the barge-in function is determined to be non-effective in the case where the environment evaluation value exceeds a predetermined threshold value by comparing the position of the user with previously recorded map information that represents noise levels in a plurality of areas.

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